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JUNE 1982

STUDY PROJECT

TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN WARTIME
BETWEEN COMMANDERS AND THE MEDIA:
ARE THEY RELATED TO FIELD
PRESS CENSORSHIP?

by

COLONEL ENGLE W. SCOTT, FA
LIEUTENANT COLONEL THOMAS C. TAYLOR, USMC

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Item 20. (Continued)

imposed war theater. Data was objectively and subjectively analyzed. H_1 was supported and H_0 was rejected. Open-ended comments revealed an overall distrust of the media with bitterness over media performance in Vietnam. Many showed a respect for First Amendment ideals, but favored imposing censorship in wartime. Most respondents indicated that total honesty with the press is always best, but some acknowledged that the military occasionally tries to deceive the media for its own purposes. While censorship was shown to alter trust attitudes, the magnitude of difference was small. Censorship is only one factor among many which foster or inhibit trust and confidence. The danger is that both the Army and the media are charged to defend freedom. If they distrust each other, society stands to lose.

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TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN WARTIME
BETWEEN COMMANDERS AND THE MEDIA:
ARE THEY RELATED TO FIELD
PRESS CENSORSHIP?

A GROUP STUDY PROJECT

by

Colonel Engle W. Scott, FA
Lieutenant Colonel Thomas C. Taylor, USMC

Lieutenant Colonel John P. Yeagley, INF
Professor Donald Penner, PhD
Professor Stephen G-M. Shenton
Study Advisors

U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
Shippensburg State College
Shippensburg, Pennsylvania 17257
2 June 1982

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AUTHOR(S): Colonel Engle W. Scott, USA, and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas C. Taylor, USMC

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Danger Middleton, senior military correspondent for The New York Times, has written that relationships between commanders and the media in World War II were marked by mutual trust and confidence, because of the imposition of censorship. The central hypothesis (H_1) was that military officers would be more trusting of the media in a censorship environment, with a null hypothesis (H_0) that censorship would have no affect on attitudes. Two sample groups of Army generals and colonels were tested by attitude response survey (75% return), with half asked to respond as if they were in a censorship-imposed war theater. Data was objectively and subjectively analyzed. H_1 was supported and H_0 was rejected. Open-ended comments revealed an overall distrust of the media with bitterness over media performance in Vietnam. Many showed a respect for First Amendment ideals, but favored imposing censorship in wartime. Most respondents indicated that total honesty with the press is always best, but some acknowledged that the military occasionally tries to deceive the media for its own purposes. While censorship was shown to alter trust attitudes, the magnitude of difference was small. Censorship is only one factor among many which foster or inhibit trust and confidence. The danger is that both the Army and the media are charged to defend freedom. If they distrust each other, society stands to lose.

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FORWARD

Senior Army officers tend to be extremely distrustful of the news media. An experiment testing the degree wherein the imposition of censorship effected that distrust indicated that Army officers may tend to confide in the press somewhat more if the military possesses the ability to censor all media stories/releases.

BACKGROUND

Drew Middleton, of the New York Times, commented that the relationship between commanders and the media in World War II was generally marked by mutual trust and confidence whereas during Vietnam that relationship tended to be one of cynicism and distrust. Middleton noted that when censorship was in effect commanders could take reporters into their confidence as regards the true situation, secure in the knowledge that such information would not be available to the enemy in the next day's newspapers. The overall result of this relationship was that at the appropriate time correspondents were able to provide the public with an accurate and indepth account of the tactical and strategic situation.¹

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, writing of his World War II experience, stated that an informed press's contribution was invaluable in maintaining the high civilian morale necessary to foster the war effort. Eisenhower believed civilians were entitled to know everything about the war except information necessarily excluded by the overriding requirement of military security.

¹Drew Middleton, "Vietnam and the Military Mind", The New York Times Magazine, Jan 10, 1982, p. 34.

Indeed, Eisenhower acknowledged that it was the duty of the commander in the field to assist in the job of maintaining high civilian morale by helping the press. Eisenhower even went so far as to describe press representatives as quasi-members of his staff.²

General Eisenhower perceived the great body of United States and English newsmen to be intelligent, patriotic and energetic. His strategy was that by taking them into his confidence the newsmen then accepted responsibility for self-discipline within their ranks. Eisenhower generally allowed reporters free movement and did not attempt to conceal any evidence of errors or blunders that were discovered. His philosophy was that by promptly airing such faults they ". . . did not grow into festering sores that would have resulted from any attempt at concealment."³

One powerful example of the mutual trust and confidence between Ike and the press occurred prior to the 1943 invasion of Sicily. Realizing that reporters would naturally speculate about the upcoming operation and unknowingly disclose information that could be of value to the Axis, Eisenhower decided to gamble. He assembled his accredited correspondents and revealed the details of Operation HUSKY. From that moment on there was no press speculation that would have inadvertently been of assistance to the enemy. Later, reporters informed Eisenhower that they went to great lengths to avoid premature disclosure of the assault.⁴

²Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1948) p. 299-300.

³Ibid., p. 299-300.

⁴Ibid., p. 170.

A somewhat different, but equally powerful, example of the mutual trust and confidence between Ike and the media was General George Patton's soldier slapping incident. While visiting a hospital General Patton encountered an apparently unwounded soldier who claimed he was suffering from nerves. George Patton did not believe in battle fatigue and he slapped the soldier and accused him of cowardice. Upon hearing of the incident Eisenhower strongly reprimanded Patton but did not relieve him. Eisenhower then explained the details of the incident to the press and related how he reprimanded Patton but did not fire him because of his warfighting talents. No effort was made by Eisenhower to suppress the incident. The reporters agreed among themselves not to publish the story. Months later news of the slapping affair reached Washington via the grapevine and a public uproar ensued. At that time Eisenhower held a press conference to enable the press at his headquarters to publish the complete story - and once again all the details were provided to the reporters.⁵

By and large the newsmen of World War II reciprocated the esteem of the military titans. In Brave Men, even the soldier's reporter, Ernie Pyle wrote that the top commanders ". . . were up early, they worked all day and after supper they went back to work far into the night. Seldom could you get one to take a day off." Pyle was especially fond of General Omar Bradley, whom he described as competent and conscientious, an officer both loved and respected by his men.⁶

⁵Ibid., p. 182.

⁶Ernie Pyle, Brave Men, (New York: Holt and Company, 1944), p. 306.

Of special interest is Middleton's assumption that censorship played a role in fostering the World War II sense of mutual confidence. His interpretation is that since the reporters could not publish information until it was cleared by official censors, the generals tended to speak freely and frankly.

The evidence tends to support Middleton's observations that the relation between the military and the media in World War II and Vietnam were diametrically opposed. One can hardly imagine General Westmoreland calling a press conference and briefing a group of reporters on the classified details of an upcoming major offensive. Further, one cannot imagine Vietnam era newsmen voluntarily withholding a newsworthy scandal such as the Patton soldier slapping incident.

Peter Braestrup in the Big Story wrote that the daily Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, (MACV), press conferences were derisively labeled the "Five O'Clock Follies" by the press corps. He said that the press described the "Five O'Clock Follies" as an ". . . Orwellian grope through the day's events as seen by MACV". Braestrup stated that even as early as the latter part of 1967 the press corps believed that Westmoreland, acting under pressure from Washington, was presenting the war only in terms of US successes. Such over-positive optimism generated strong feelings of cynicism among newsmen. Out of this cynicism some developed a determination to counter with stories that exposed corruption, ineptness and the horrors of war.⁷

General Westmoreland's recent press conference, held to denounce a 23 January 1982 CBS documentary entitled "The Conspiracy", was quite different

⁷Peter Braestrup, The Big Story (Vol. 1), (Boulder Colorado: Waterview Press, 1977), p. 18, p. 345.

in its tone from General Eisenhower's wartime conferences. The documentary charged that Westmoreland knowingly deceived the President, the Congress, the press and the public concerning enemy strength during the Vietnam War. Westmoreland counter-charged that ". . . notorious reporter Mike Wallace (prosecuted) me in a star chamber procedure."⁸ It was, retired Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker said afterwards, "just like the old days" in Saigon with Westmoreland fervently defending his performance as Commander, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Skeptical reporters repeatedly pressed him with tough questions and there were strong feelings on both sides of the issue.⁹

In summary, the perception is that in World War II the media representatives believed in the generals and developed a feeling of comradeship, a sense of "being team players". If one accepts that interpretation then it is quite easy to understand how a negative relationship developed in Vietnam. In Vietnam the media representatives apparently believed they were being deceived by the military and thus became protagonists and adversaries rather than allies.

HYPOTHESES

Orwant and Ullman found that military officers tend to have more restrictive attitudes than their civilian counterparts, concerning the right of the media to publish news.¹⁰ Another study also found less favorable attitudes among military officers toward the media than a civilian group.¹¹ Kirkhorn suggested

⁸Robert G. Kaiser, "Westmoreland Denounces TV Program Accusing Him of Cover-Up", Washington Post, 27 Jan 1982.

⁹Charles Kaiser and Nancy Stodtman, "Replaying an Old War Game", Newsweek, 8 Feb 1982.

¹⁰Jack Orwant and John Ullman, "Pentagon Officers' Attitudes on Reporting Military News", Journalism Quarterly, 51-460, Fall 1974.

¹¹Michael Singletary, "Attitudes of Military Censors and Other Officers on Mass Media Issues", Journalism Quarterly, 54:727-732, Winter, 1977.

that journalists could gain benefits by collaborative arrangements with "ad hoc" groups.¹² Although the military is a far cry from the "ad hoc" arrangements he suggested, the degree of trust and confidence between the military and the press should be directly related to the openness, accuracy and overall value of news gathering. Both institutions stand to gain.

Intuitively, and as expressed by Mr. Middleton, censorship would logically provide some feeling of a buffer, or a degree of protection to individuals who are non-trusting of the press. Therefore, the central hypothesis (H_1) is that military officers, when placed in a wartime censorship environment, would be more trusting of the media than a similar group in a non-censorship environment. The null hypothesis (H_0) follows that there would be no difference in attitudes between the two groups concerning trust of the media.

METHOD

This study tested two sample groups. They were: 168 Army Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels attending the Army War College and 120 Army General Officers who were serving or had served as a Corps or Division Commander, Corps Chief of Staff, Assistant Division Commander or in an equivalent position. Thirty of the generals were retired and had served in senior combat leadership positions as far back as World War II. The general officers provided a base of past and current experience in working with the press, and the Army War College students provided a sample of the future leaders of the Army. In fact, 17 percent of eligible Army War College Graduates have been selected for promotion to general officer since 1970. The attitudes of sample groups

¹²Michael Kirkhorn, "The Virtuous Journalist, An Exploratory Essay", The Quill, 70:9-23, February, 1982.

were tested by written survey, with a 75% return for both groups. Prior to administering the questionnaire, a pilot survey was conducted, using 18 War College student officers as subjects. From this pretest, the survey instrument was refined. (See Appendix A)

Questions 1-8 in the survey were demographic. These were followed by a series of declarative statements about the military and the media which required a response ranging from 1= strongly agree to 5= strongly disagree. Statements 9-20 were designed to measure support or non-support of the 1st Amendment and/or the media. There were five positive (support) statements and five negative (non-support) statements.

A special situation was artificially created after question 20. Respondents were required to read a statement about a hypothetical wartime environment.

Version #1 read as follows:

Questions 21 through 38 are framed in a wartime environment. Respond to the statement as if you are a senior commander (two stars or above) in the war zone. Field press censorship has been imposed. All media communications, i.e., written, visual, oral, manual or electronic, are previewed and approved or altered by censorship officers on your staff. Use the same 1-to-5 scale for your answers.

Version #2 read as follows:

Questions 21 through 38 are framed in a wartime environment. Respond to these statements as if you are a senior commander (two stars or above) in the war zone. Field press censorship has not been imposed. The press has been requested not to

include any information in any form of communication which would be harmful to U.S. forces or advantageous to enemy forces. However, the final decision to include or omit information rests with the individual reporter or editor. You can request withdrawal of press credentials and passports, but cannot order such action. Use the same 1-to-5 scale for your answers.

Statements 21-38 were designed to measure how the respondent would act in various trust/distrust situations in a wartime environment. There were nine positive (trust) and nine negative (distrust) statements, which were interspersed throughout this section.

Versions #1 and #2 were equally divided between members of each respondent group. Except for the situation statement, versions #1 and #2 were identical. None of the respondents was informed there was another version.

Prior to analysis of data all answers to negative statements were inversely recoded to reflect 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 4= agree and 5= strongly agree, 3 remains= neutral. Thus, for each question, a value closer to 1 indicates more trust or support of the media than a value closer to 5 (distrust). At Appendix B is an explanation of statistical methods and terms.

For each set of variables tested, a comparative "index" was computed. The "index" was an aggregate of Means for all questions, and was used as a quick method to determine if further analysis of any particular variable might yield significant results. It was not an attempt to absolutely measure trust.

The last question was "open ended", and was included to solicit personal views and experiences. It (number 39) read as follows:

This is a chance for you to express your views or relate experiences which would shed more light on military-media relations. Please use this page or continuation sheets, if necessary. We are interested in situations or factors which either foster or inhibit trust and confidence between the military and the media, especially during war.

RESULTS

Of the respondents, 81% replied they had participated in direct combat; 58% were designated a combat arms specialty. Half had served in assignments having regular, direct contact with the media, but only 35% had regular media contact in a combat zone. Of the 78% who had been mentioned by or were closely associated with events mentioned in the media, 52% felt the media had treated the story fairly and objectively, 34% felt the media was inaccurate and 13% were neutral.

H₁ results were measured by comparative analysis between the censorship/no censorship answers for Q's 9-20 and 21-38. A T-Test was computed for the difference between Means for each question. Of the 10 questions preceding the situation statement (9-20), there were no significant differences between Mean responses. The "indices" for Q's 9-20 were 3.748 (Censorship) and 3.722 (No censorship). The difference was not significant. Essentially then, the two groups showed no reliable differences in their general attitudes about the press, prior to reading the situation statement. (See Appendix C1)

T-Tests conducted on the Means of Q's 21-38 revealed a significant difference between the censorship and no censorship groups on 6 out of 18 items. All items except Q 35 showed more trust by the censorship group. The "indices" for Q's 21-38 were 3.235 (Censorship) and 3.444 (No censorship). (See Appendix C2)

A Fisher's sign test between the Mean responses of the censorship group and the Mean responses of the non-censorship group for Q's 21-38 was performed. Of the 18 questions, 17 had Means showing more trust by the censorship group. Assuming the two groups were homogenous, the probability for each item that one group would show more trust than the other is equal. Thus, one would expect about half the items to show greater trust for one group and half to show greater trust for the other group. By the Fisher sign test, the probability of observing 17 out of 18 items on which the Means for censorship are less than the Means for non-censorship is .0001. These results, then, show a minor but clear shift in attitudes of the two groups, after reading the situation statement, with the censorship group becoming more trusting than the non-censorship group.

An analysis of differences between Means of elements of demographics was conducted. Two items appeared to correlate with the degree of trust. All others showed negligible differences and their results were not considered further. The two items showing positive correlation were rank, (Colonels vs Generals), and status (active vs retired).

General Officers tended to be more trusting than Colonels/Lieutenant Colonels, with "indices" of 3.608 (Q's 9-20), then 3.032 (Q's 21-38) for Generals and 3.752 (Q's 9-20), then 3.370 (Q's 21-38) for Colonels. Of the 28 questions, 24 showed more trust for the Generals and of these, ten were significant. Of the four questions where Colonels were more trusting, none was significant. This difference may be due to the Colonel's relative lack of experience, which may lead to caution. Generals have more experience with the press and should be more comfortable in that arena. (See Appendices C3 and C4)

Similarly, retired officers were more trusting than officers on active duty. "Indices" were 3.752 (Q's 9-20), then 3.370 (Q's 21-38) for Active Officers and 3.608 (Q's 9-20) then 3.032 (Q's 21-38) for Retired Officers. Of the 28 questions, 25 showed more trust for retired officers, and of these, eight were significant. Of the three questions showing active officers as more trusting, one was significant. As with rank, the difference in trust may be related to experience, but with another difference. Many of the retirees experiences span three wars including a much broader spectrum of media relations. (See Appendices C5 and C6)

Questions 17 and 18 dealt with military responsibilities towards the media. Their data are not included in the analysis. Yet they reveal something of how military officers see themselves and their institution. They resoundingly agreed with the statement of "Military officers should scrupulously avoid misleading the media", with a Mean of 1.440. To the statement "Military censorship generally tends to hide events that are embarrassing

to the military", respondents were less sure of military performance in the past, with a Mean of 3.176.

As expected, respondents expressed an overall distrustful opinion of the press. An overall "index" of 3.767 was measured for answers to questions 9-20 and 3.340 for 21-38. However, these measurements are not presented as absolute, nor should they be interpreted as such. The risk levels of the situation, or what may result from granting some trust, seemed to have a bearing on the level of trust response. Risk could be broken into two broad categories. One could be described as personal-professional risk; i.e., a risk of ego damages, personal admonishment, relief or other career degradation. Examples of this are General MacArthur and his relief over public disagreement with presidential authority;¹³ Major General Singlaub, and his forced retirement over public disagreement with presidential policy,¹⁴ and Major General Schweitzer's removal from the National Security Council following his public announcement of personal opinions about Soviet strengths and intentions.¹⁵ The second type of risk is military risk, i.e., that risk which may result in increased danger or defeat of U.S. or friendly forces caused by the inadvertent

¹³R.H. Revere and A.M. Schlesinger, Jr., The General and The President (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1951), p. 168-171.

¹⁴George Wilson, "General Singlaub Agrees to Retire After 2nd Attack on Carter Policy", The Washington Post, April 29, 1978, p. A-1, Col. 5.

¹⁵Michael Celter, "General Relieved of NSC Job After Unauthorized Speech", The Washington Post, October 21, 1981, p. A-1, Col. 2.

disclosure of military secrets. General Eisenhower took these risks in WWII when he briefed the press prior to the invasion of Sicily.¹⁶

Low risk statements, such as 21, 25 and 31 received high trust scores, while high risk statements, such as 23, 27, 36 and 38 received the least trust scores.

Therefore, this study did not measure absolute trust, since a very precise instrument of equal high and low risk items would be necessary. However, the overall tenor of answers to the opened-end question (#39) generally reflected distrust. Two active duty general officers, with extensive combat experience, summed up their distrust as follows:

I have over five years infantry and special operations experience during two wars. I have not had a favorable, honest media coverage of a single action. Therefore, I treat the current and recent past members of the media as potential adversaries. I have been misquoted, taken out of context and credited for utterings I have not made, by the press.

. . . I feel the needs of the Army are most often best served if I have as little as possible to do with the press. If given the choice, this would be exactly the way I would conduct myself with the press during wartime. I will be too busy keeping my troops alive to deal with people who I don't really feel give a damn at all in the final analysis what happens to my soldiers as long as they get a good story out of it.

The following comments were typical and reflected two colonel's distrust:

My main objection with the media is the fact that they have a philosophy that they write/broadcast/televise whatever it takes to "sell" - regardless of truth, national security, or

¹⁶Eisenhower, op. cit., p. 170.

regard for personal/professional integrity. It is no wonder to me that the news media profession has "earned" one of the lowest ratings in America (World?).

I strongly believe the media cannot be trusted to accurately report what is happening. They tend to reflect their own biases (usually liberal/left wing and antimilitary). Many cannot accurately report military matters because of their ignorance and arrogance.

The open-ended question was especially valuable in that it allowed officers to express in their own terms their perceptions of the media. While the survey instrument was designed to measure relative attitudes, the last question allowed respondents to fully present their views in shades of gray rather than black and white. This question also allowed respondents to pursue themes not included in the questionnaire.

One message that came through loud and clear was that the 1st Amendment is a basic guarantee of individual freedom but the press tends to usurp power to the detriment of the nation. Fairly typical was one active duty Major General's response:

The First Amendment is a basic tenant of this nation's foundation. I do not believe the framers of the Constitution meant a few powerful editors could hold sway over the education and development of opinions of the nation's people. They have this capability now . . . By 1968, it was as though the editors were voting for a political defeat of the country. Such reporting to the American people surely was a factor that kept the North Vietnamese from stopping, resulting in a political (not military) defeat of the United States.

One retired three star general, a highly decorated combat commander whose career spanned WWII to Vietnam, discussed the danger of the media's power by writing:

It goes beyond a military-media relationship. Television has spawned a monster that I believe is a threat to our society and to our freedom. The recent media emphasis on adversary relationship and creation of news events results in setting the agenda for the country and is a threat to effective government . . . The media is so set on turning one individual against another . . . that our government is becoming ineffective and our leaders ever more obsequious because they don't dare take them on.

Several general officers pursued the theme as expressed by Colonel Harry Summers, that a significant factor in the media's lack of support for the Vietnam War, as compared to the press's positive support in World War II, was the lack of unity among the American people.¹⁷ A retired lieutenant general wrote that ". . . In the case of World War II, we had the support of the populace, and the press therefore tended to print good news or at the worst neutral." An active duty general wrote . . . "We are tainted in our view of the Vietnam conflict. Recall during WWII the entire nation was behind the Armed Forces. The news media, movies, songs - it was praise the Lord and pass the ammunition."

Feelings of bitterness and a sense of betrayal was prevalent in numerous general officer responses, below are two examples by a prominent, retired four-star battlefield leader and an active duty major general.

I have personal experiences with such people during both the Vietnam War and in the Dominican Republic (1965-66) which included incidents when national TV networks deliberately fabricated "evidence" or falsified a story and put it on tape. Clever splicing of real and bogus film is one technique; splicing two films together of the same area but on different dates is another.

In 1965 in Saigon I observed one of the networks interview a group of 5-6 young Vietnamese males as to their opinion on the village pacification program. The first three responded to the effect that it was a wise course and seemed to be succeeding.

¹⁷Harry G. Summers, Jr. On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context. U.S. Department of the Army Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA 1981, p. 2

The fourth objected to the pacification program pointing out that it was not working, could not work and that the US was wasting money. The other Vietnamese were not questioned and only the negative interview was shown in CONUS.

A requirement for censorship was a commonly expressed sentiment by the general officer respondents. The below two comments are representative of such sentiments.

The public's right to know in a free society must be carefully balanced with US interests. The media today have assumed power far beyond anything envisioned by the framers of the Constitution - particularly TV. Thus censorship is required to balance that power and protect US interests. Censorship, like anything else, must not be abused by the military commander.

I draw from my experience a strong conviction that in the next war, even with strong public support and a national commitment for victory, it is immensely important that the activities of media representatives be tightly controlled and their reporting censored. Without it the daily fare of viewing and reading of death, destruction, mistakes, and questionable decisions which are characteristic of battle, will surely and steadily erode the national and public commitment to victory, regardless of the true importance of that victory.

Despite the overwhelming majority of negative comments some generals remained very positive towards the media. One active duty brigadier general stated . . . "My experience has proven that the media will generally respond favorably to an honest and forthright approach. Be straightforward and they will do likewise to you." Another active duty general wrote . . . "I generally have had healthy, constructive relationships with the press. The key, I believe, is integrity and mutual trust and respect." A retired three star said . . . "All in all I have had good relations with the media. I have found the media fair and square generally."

This paper has focused on trust and confidence as a function of censorship. Primarily, we explored the military attitudes and opinions concerning situations which foster or inhibit trust of the press. There are, however, other sides to this multifaceted coin. Possible use and abuse of the media by government institutions, including the military, may have been a powerful incentive for the press to be distrustful. Some officers mentioned this in their comments. Examples from two Colonels follow:

We also had senior officers who (in Vietnam) tried to "use" the media, and the journalist who got burned by accepting self-serving releases was dubious and skeptical of military officials, and justifiably so.

We - the military - are our own worst enemy in dealing with the press. We try to dazzle them with our footwork and wind up with out feet in our mouths.

Quite common in the responses was the idea that the establishment of credibility or a demonstration of respect of trust may be one of the strongest motivators in altering a distrustful military. Below are comments by two generals that are fairly representative of this theme:

In dealing with the media, a personal relationship must be established. I feel that I can talk to some members of the media and that they have the same interest as me - The United States.

The media is not a homogeneous group. Some members are responsible and some are not and as a result a commander must be aware of those whom he can trust.

In summary, many respondents, especially among the general officers, seemed very sensitive to the attendant, natural conflict between the 4th Estate and government institutions. Probably because of their experience in

dealing with the media, general officer responses were more objective, and balanced in their opinions and showed a more sophisticated level of understanding. Further, there were some retired generals who had served in three wars (World War II, Korea and Vietnam) and therefore had experiences, especially in World War II, with a press that supported the war.

Based on the results, H_1 was supported and H_0 rejected. Yet, given the small magnitude of differences, one should not expect censorship decisions to greatly affect trust and confidence accorded to correspondents in future wars. Put another way, if censorship alone were the only mechanism which could alter trust and confidence, it appears more accurate to state that it would make the military slightly "less distrustful", rather than "more trusting". While censorship may have some bearing on military attitudes and treatment of the press, many other variables affect individual actions when facing a real, rather than imagined situation.

CONCLUSIONS

The responses indicated that the imposition of censorship would be a positive factor in reducing somewhat the degree of distrust that senior Army officers harbor for the media. Nevertheless, even with the imposition of censorship it appears that the overall attitude of senior Army officers towards the media would be extremely negative. Furthermore, lieutenant colonels and colonels, have had only the negative experiences of Vietnam without the counterbalancing positive experiences of World War II and Korea. Therefore, if these younger officer attitudes are retained, the negative trend will become aggravated as the older generals retire.

The survey clearly revealed a healthy, genuine respect for the 1st Amendment by senior Army officers. Yet, the same group of officers were equally strong in their belief that battlefield censorship is in the best interests of the country.

Some will argue that a healthy distrust of the media is a positive thing. This line of reasoning is that the country "got burned" by an irresponsible press in Vietnam and proper precautions must be taken; i.e., censorship should be imposed in the event of another war. These people point out that in all of the US's other wars, some form of censorship was imposed and that even such a pillar of the Republic as Abraham Lincoln closed many a hostile newspaper.

Others will argue that a free and unfettered press is the basic protection of our civil liberties. These people will remind one of the wisdom of the founding fathers in providing safeguards against restrictions of the press. This argument states that a characteristic of totalitarian governments is control of the press. Proponents of this point of view say that censorship justified by wartime necessity is but a start and can lead to further justifications for censorship and perhaps permanent loss of basic freedoms.

One conclusion is obvious. The top leadership of one of our society's basic institutions - the Army, is very distrustful of another basic institution - the media. The danger herein is that both institutions are charged with defending the society and if the Army and the media threaten each other then it is the country that suffers.

The path out of the wilderness is not clear, for as Middleton pointed out, it is very possible that the military will be called upon to participate in new third-world counterinsurgency or stability operations that are equally as devious to the US body politic as was Vietnam. One has but to read the papers concerning the explosive situation in Central America to see the potential for that sort of military involvement. A sense of mutual trust and confidence between the military and the media must be reforged lest we relive the painful experiences of Vietnam. That we may return to a relationship described below by General Omar Bradley is doubtful, but we ought to seek out the barriers to trust and confidence and attack them from both sides.

Throughout the war many of these newsmen were better informed on pending operations than some members of my staff. Together they represented the public interest, and they would have been poorly equipped to evaluate our current operations had they not been adequately informed on what was to come. But though they were privy to many of our secrets, not once during the war did a newsmen accredited to my command willfully violate a confidence of mine.¹⁸

¹⁸ Omar N. Bradley, A Soldier's Story, (New York: Holt and Co., 1951), p. 83.

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MILITARY-MEDIA QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE MARK YOUR ANSWERS ON THE ATTACHED ANSWER SHEET OPPOSITE THE CORRESPONDING QUESTION NUMBER. USE A NUMBER 2 LEAD PENCIL. IF YOU NEED TO ERASE, DO SO COMPLETELY. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE TERM "MEDIA" INCLUDES REPORTERS, CORRESPONDENTS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, EDITORS AND PRODUCTION PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS OF NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, TELEVISION AND RADIO.

1. What is your Primary Specialty?

- (1) Combat
- (2) Combat Support
- (3) Combat Service Support
- (4) Other

2. What is your present status?

- (1) Active Duty
- (2) Retired
- (3) National Guard or Reserve on Active Duty

3. What is the highest rank you held on Active Duty?

- (1) Lieutenant Colonel/Colonel
- (2) Brigadier General
- (3) Major General
- (4) Lieutenant General
- (5) General

4. Have you participated in direct ground or aerial combat?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

5. Have any of your previous assignments involved direct contact with the media on a recurring basis? (Once or more a quarter)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

6. While assigned to a combat zone, did you have direct contact with the media on a recurring basis? (Once or more a quarter)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Never assigned to a combat zone

7. Have you either been personally mentioned in a media story or closely associated with events which were mentioned in the media?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

8. If the answer to 7 above was yes, do you agree or disagree that the article represented a reasonable attempt by the media to present an accurate, objective and fair story?

- (1) Strongly agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neutral
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly disagree
- (6) Not aware of results of story
- (7) Answer to 7 was no

For statements 9 through 38, please select the answer which best represents your opinion. Use the following 1-to-5 scale.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>

9. The American public has the right to be informed about the details of battlefield operations as they occur.

10. The news media generally represents an objective, independent source of information concerning wartime military operations.

11. The media will publish information harmful to U.S. wartime interests if the information will make a good story.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>

12. The media will voluntarily withhold publishing information that the military considers harmful to U.S. wartime interests.
13. The American public has the right to know the status of the war, to include details of U.S. force defeats and weaknesses.
14. The media generally reported the Vietnam War news accurately.
15. The U.S. Government has the right to impose formal wartime media censorship.
16. Members of the media that violate formal field censorship rules should lose their credentials as a minimum and be prosecuted, if appropriate.
17. Military officers should scrupulously avoid misleading the media.
18. Military censorship generally tends to hide events that are embarrassing to the military.
19. Atrocity photographs and stories attributed to allied forces, such as those pertaining to the My Lai incident, should be censored.
20. The government has the right to require the media to publish atrocity photographs and stories, such as the Bataan death march, to support the war effort.

NOTE: Read the following situation before continuing.

SITUATION STATEMENT

21. I would be more inclined to entrust my personal views with a reporter if he had already demonstrated his respect of my trust in the past, than if he were unknown to me.
22. I would be inclined to reveal as little information to the media as possible.
23. I would desire a public affairs officer to be present during my discussions with the media.
24. I would be inclined to allow the media to visit my organization and to interview personnel of all ranks without restrictions.
25. I would be inclined to allow the media to interview only those personnel whom I had nominated or approved for interview.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>

26. I would generally allow the media free movement throughout the combat zone.
27. I would deny the media the opportunity to film U.S. casualties if I believed such film to be harmful to U.S. interests.
28. I would avoid furnishing information on U.S. battlefield reverses to the media.
29. I would tend to deny the media the opportunity to film enemy casualties if I believed such film to be harmful to U.S. interests.
30. I would tend to deny the media the opportunity to film civilian casualties if I believed such film harmful to U.S. interests.
31. I would freely discuss with the media instances of high U.S. soldier morale.
32. I would freely discuss with the media instances of low U.S. soldier morale.
33. I would freely discuss with the media my opinions of differences in capabilities between the enemy and U.S. forces.
34. I would tend to avoid discussion with the media on enemy advantages over U.S. forces.
35. I would tend to avoid discussion with the media on U.S. advantages over enemy forces.
36. I would feel free to discuss with the media off-the-record opinions concerning political goals and objectives of the United States.
37. I would tend to freely discuss with the media the progress of the war, even if it were not going well.
38. I would feel free to discuss with the media my off-the-record opinion of any warfighting restrictions imposed by civilian authority.

(continued on next page)

39. This is a chance for you to express your views or relate experiences which would shed more light on military-media relations. Please use this page or continuation sheets, if necessary. We are interested in situations or factors which either foster or inhibit trust and confidence between the military and the media, especially during war.

APPENDIX B

STATISTICAL METHODS AND TERMINOLOGY

1. Mean. ($\bar{X}$). A measure of the tendency of a set of scores to cluster, (central tendency). $\bar{X} = \frac{\text{Sum of scores}}{\text{Number of Scores}}$. Mean is also described as an average.
2. Standard Deviation. (S) This is a measure of dispersion of values around the Mean (opposite of clustering). It is calculated by first computing a term called "Variance" (S^2), then taking the square root of the result. "Variance" is the average of the squared deviations from the Mean. Variance, and Standard Deviation give a measure of the scatter of values from the average, or expected values.
3. Standard Error. (S_m). This is a statistical measure of sampling error, and is related to Standard Deviation and sample size. It is computed as follows: $S_m = \frac{\text{Standard Deviation}}{\text{Number of cases in sample}}$
4. T-Test. This is a commonly used test when comparing differences between the Means of two-group problems, as we had in this study. The test indicates how likely the difference is to occur by chance.

The t-test shows the statistical significance of the data. It answers the question: "how confident am I that this data occurred by chance or is it representative of the entire population from which the sample was drawn?"

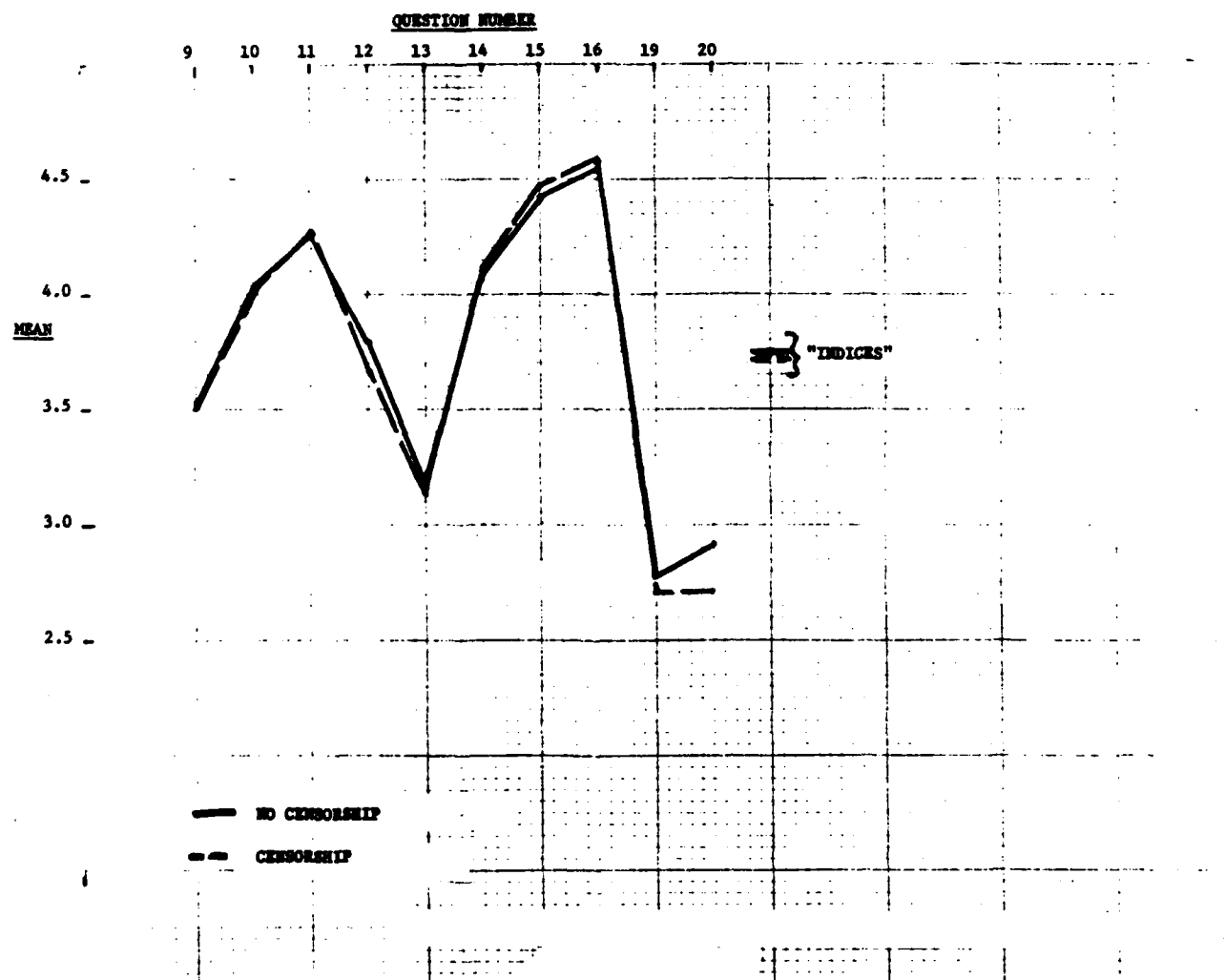
In this study, the t-test was used to test significance of the differences between Means at the 95% level of confidence. It should be noted that the

t-test does not indicate how meaningful the difference is; it simply indicates how likely the difference is to occur by chance. A very simplified t-test is calculated by comparing the difference of Means ($\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2$) to twice the largest standard error ($2 S_m$). If $\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2$ is greater than ($>$) $2 S_m$, then the confidence level is greater than ($>$) 95% that the difference is not due to chance, and is called significant. If $\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2$ is less than ($<$) $2 S_m$, then the confidence level is less than ($<$) 95%, and is called insignificant.

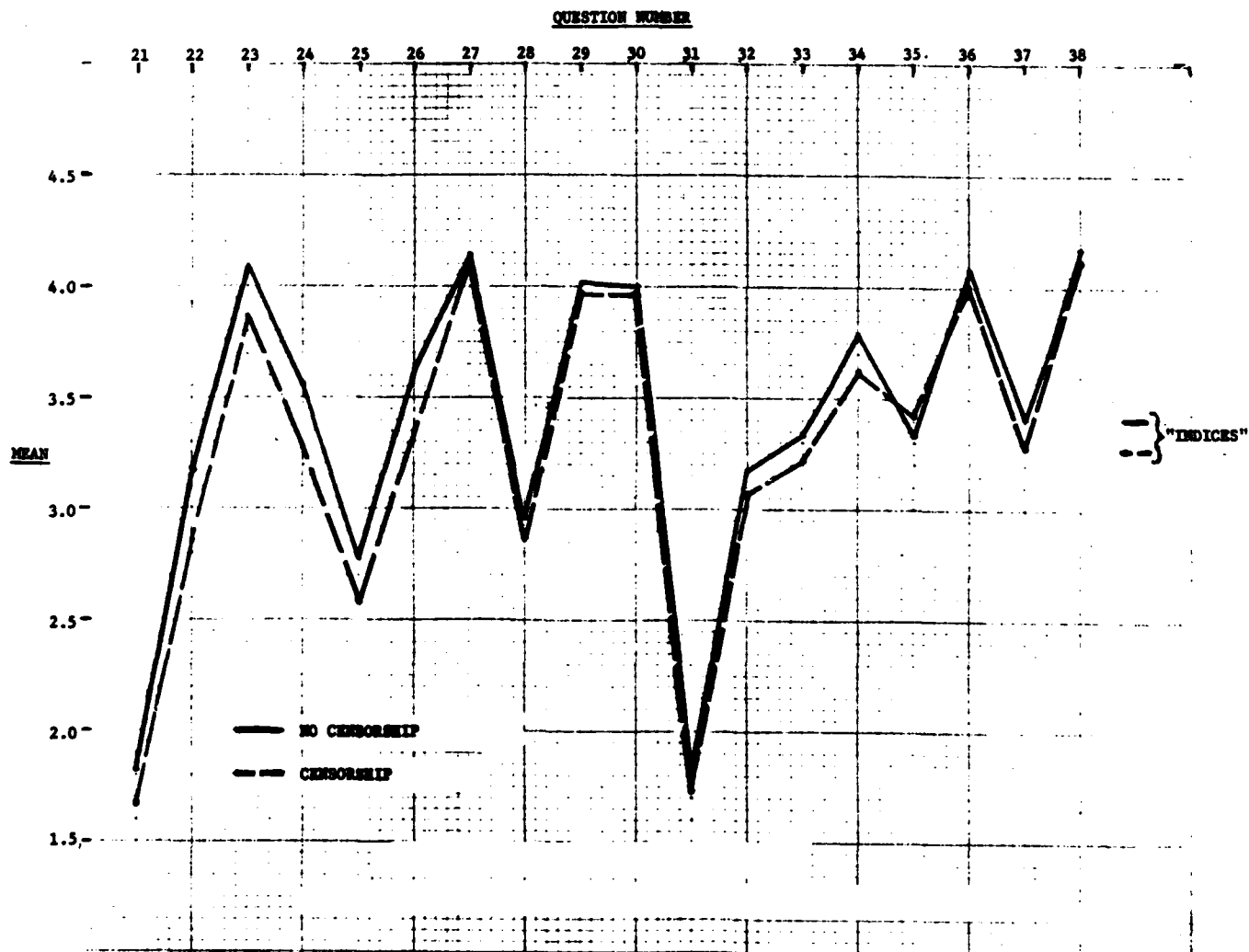
5. Fisher's Sign Test. This test is a measure of the likelihood of a chance occurrence happening, in this case, if an even chance occurrence exists, such as when flipping a coin, one would expect 50 heads and 50 tails out of 100 flips. Any difference from 50/50, such as 55/45 is given a probability of happening, by Fisher sign tables. If the difference is very great, such as 17/1, then the probability of that being a chance result is very remote (.0001), or odds of one in 10,000 that it was by chance.

6. An unusual pattern developed in analyzing the answers to Q's 21-38. From 21-26, the difference in Means between versions #1 and #2 were all statistically significant ($p < .05$). The remainder (27-38), all were insignificant ($p > .05$). This may be due to the final design of the questionnaire which was not detected from the pilot study. The situational statement was placed in the middle of page 3. Questions 12-20 preceded the statement and 21-25 followed it, all on the same page. Respondents may have tended to identify early with the situation and then tend to disidentify with it on succeeding pages. This may also explain the sudden divergence in Means in

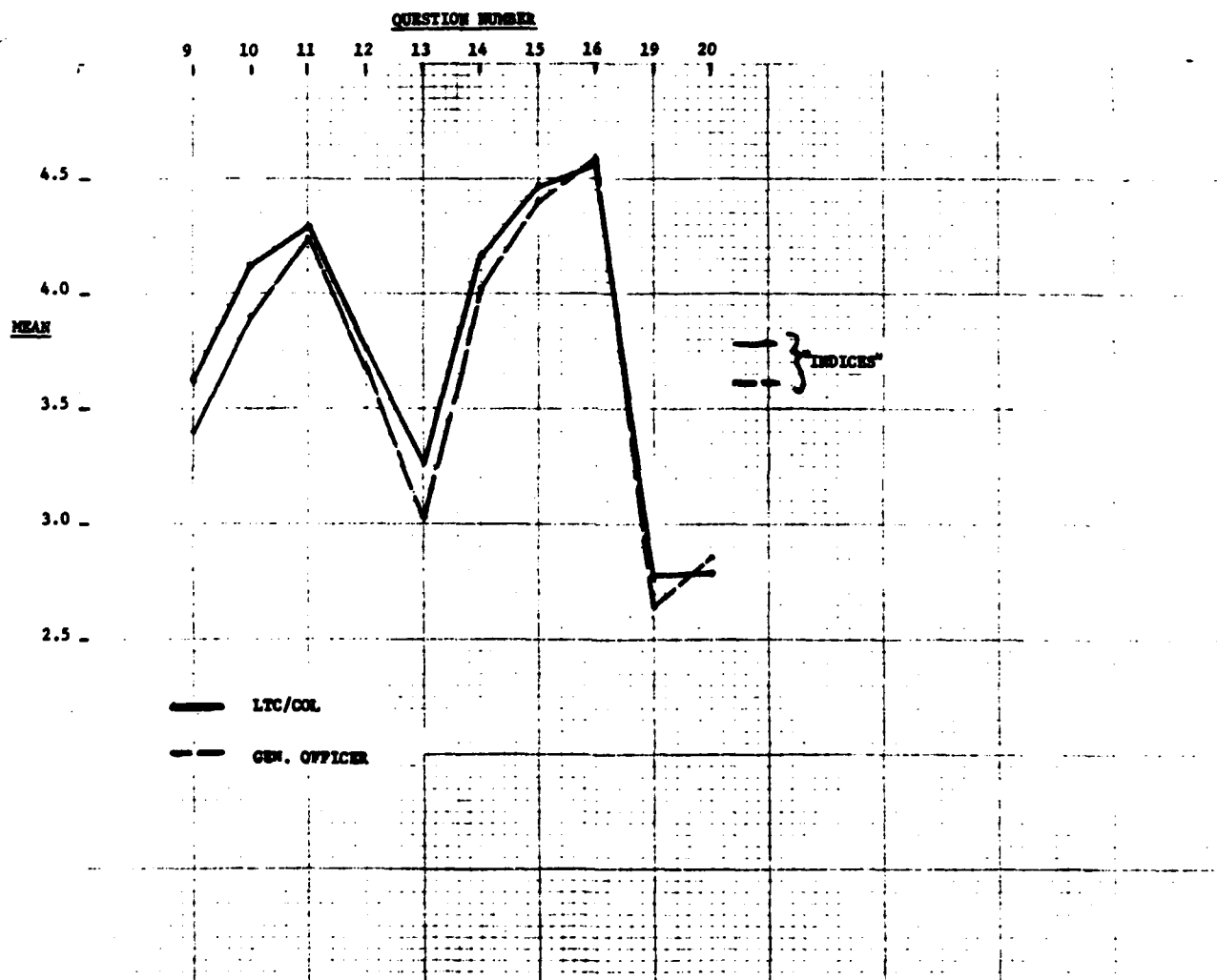
Question 20, where respondents had a chance to read the situation, then go back and answer the question on the same page. Future studies should avoid this pitfall, by separating the situational transition by time or space. The situation should then be reinforced by repeating it for later questions.



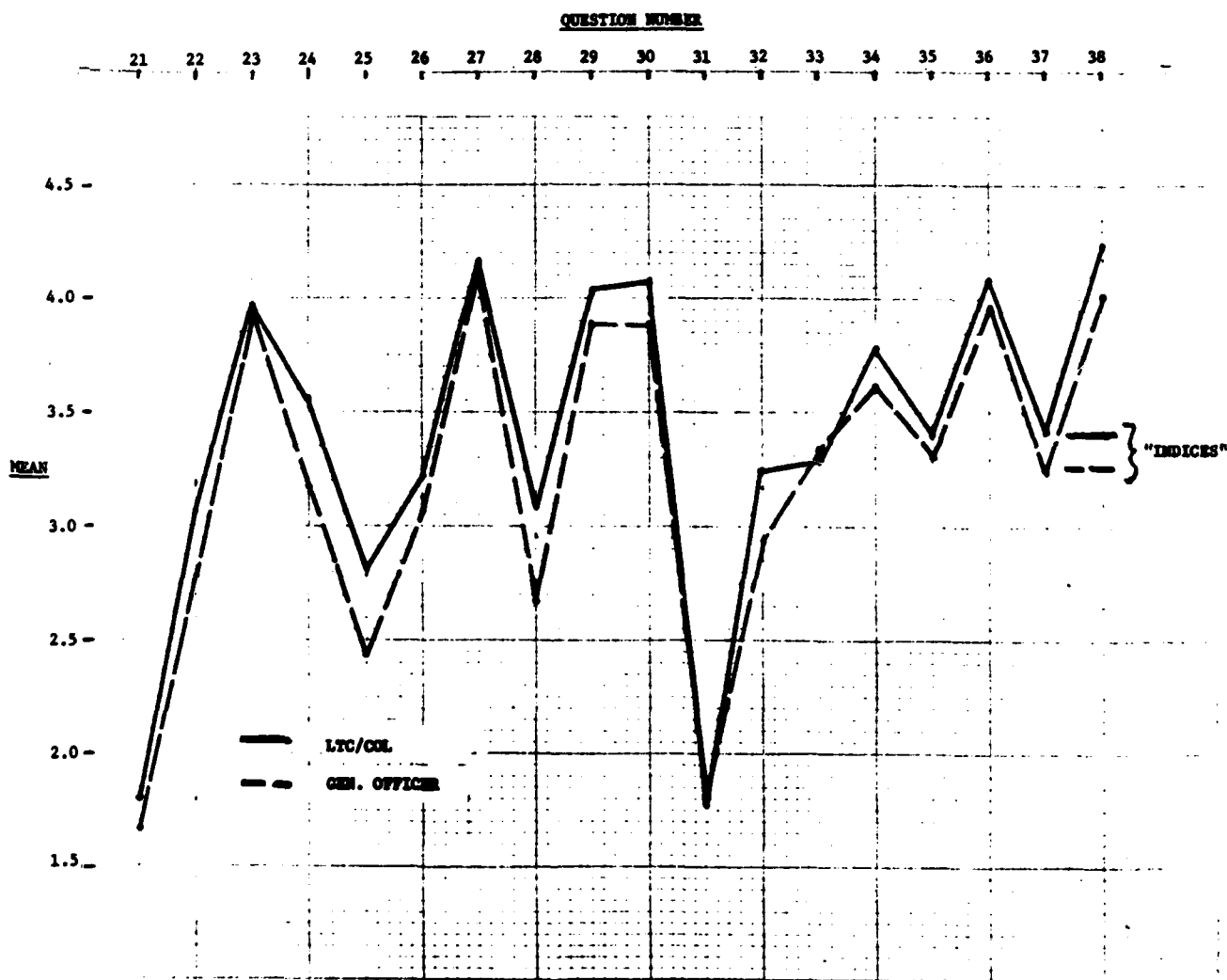
Response Means, Questions 9-20,
Censorship vs no-Censorship



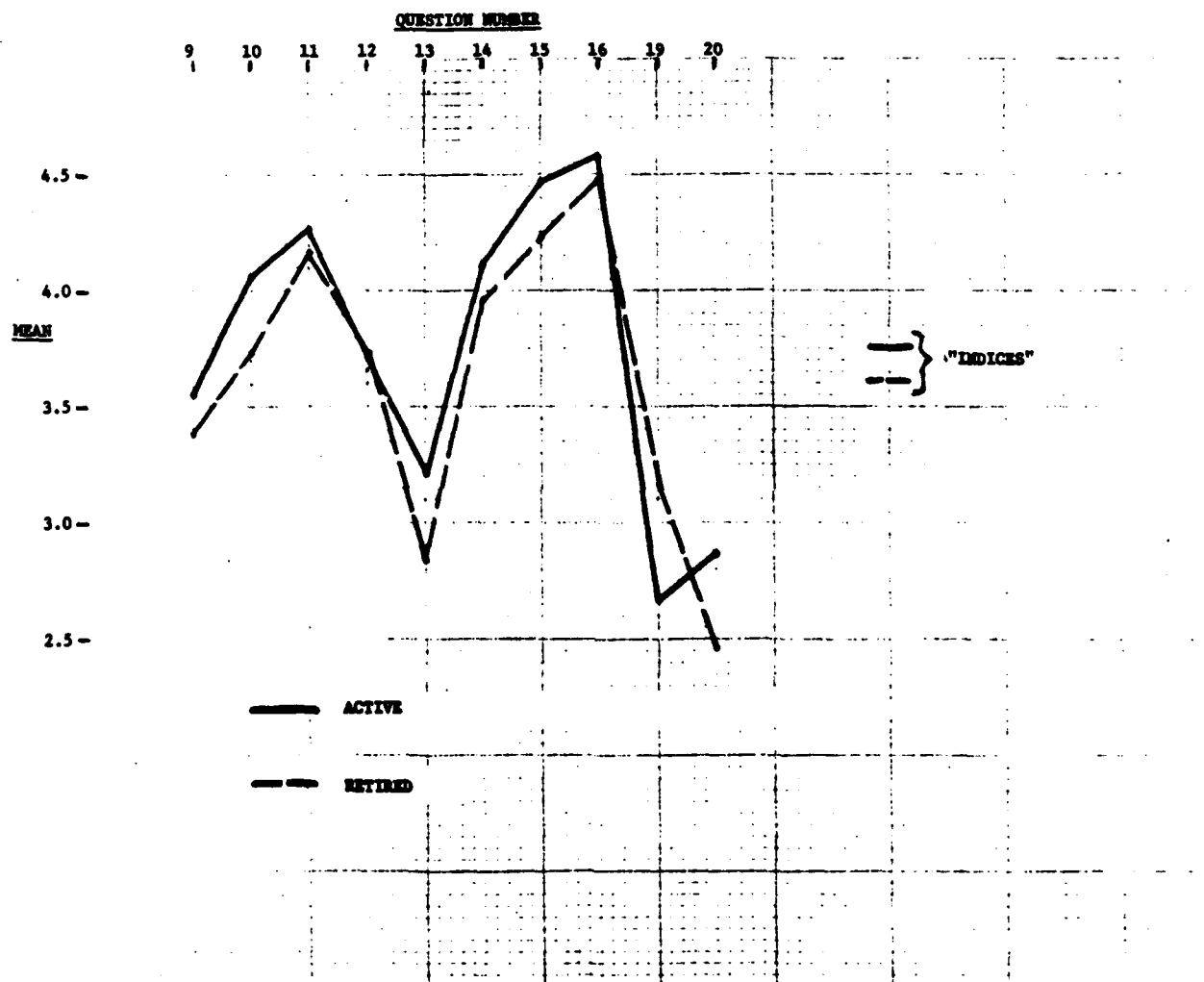
Response Means, Questions 21-38,
Censorship vs no-Censorship



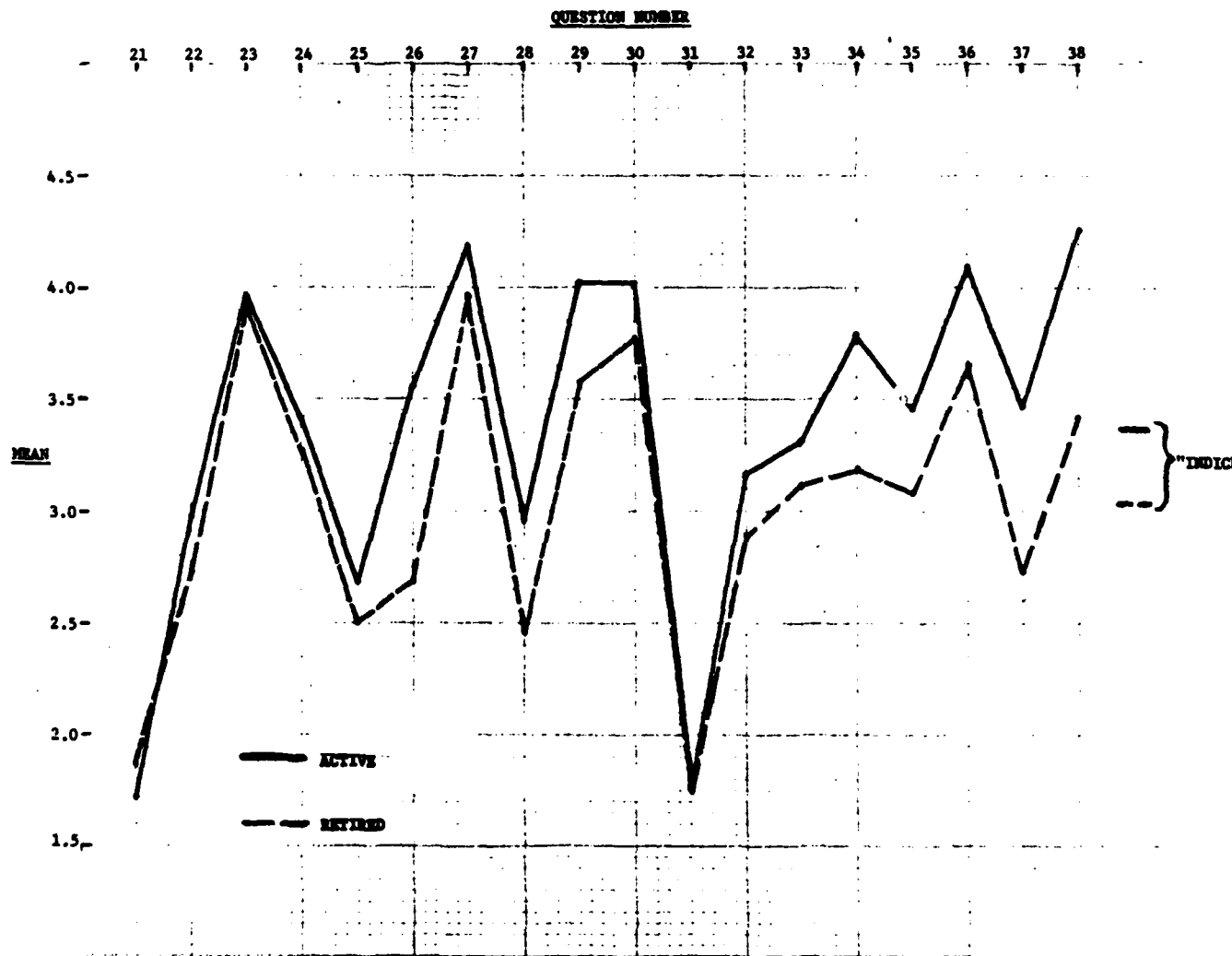
Response Means, Questions 9-20
Colonels vs Generals



Response Means, Questions 21-38
Colonels vs Generals



Response Means, Questions 9-20
Active vs Retired



Response Means, Questions 21-38
Active vs Retired